

December 13, 2007

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a legend in the Colorado State University and Fort Collins, Colorado community: Coach Sonny Lubick. For 15 seasons, he led the CSU Rams to a record of 108-74, six conference titles and nine bowl games.

Originally from Butte, Montana, Coach Lubick graduated from The University of Montana-Western in 1960 and began his coaching career ten years later at Montana State University. After eight seasons as an assistant coach, he was promoted to Head Coach.

His hard work and early success served as the foundation for what would become a remarkable coaching career.

After serving as an assistant coach for various other programs, Coach Lubick accepted the head coaching position at Colorado State University prior to the 1993 season. He began by implementing an aggressive effort to recruit players and expand the program beyond anything previously achieved. With new recruits and under new leadership, the CSU Rams reached new heights during Coach Lubick's second year with CSU. During that remarkable season, the Rams finished with a 10-2 record, clinching the university's first ever WAC Championship and a trip to the Holiday Bowl. The 1994 season was the beginning of a new era in Colorado State football, earning Sonny Lubick National Coach of the Year honors from *Sports Illustrated* magazine. Lubick also joined an elite list of coaches in 2005, as active Division IA coaches with 100 or more career wins with their current institution. This group includes only nine members.

The success Coach Lubick's program achieved led to the construction of the McGraw Athletic Center in 1999, and recently the university has announced its intention to build indoor practice facilities and an academic and training center, both of which are attributed to Sonny Lubick's leadership and efforts. Coach Lubick's personal philosophy of responsibility, character, respect and perspective has been the driving force behind the success of both the football team and the surrounding community.

Sonny Lubick's family oriented approach to coaching and life has earned a multitude of accolades. In 2003 he was recognized as "Father of the Year" by the American Diabetes Association – Colorado Chapter. That same year he was also named one of the four national finalists for the Eddie Robinson Coach of Distinction Award for his community service. Coach Lubick regularly gives his time to St. Jude's Children's Hospital and several other local charities. In 2005 the Fort Collins Board of Realtors named Coach Lubick "Citizen of the Year," and most recently the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce awarded him the Collins Award, given to local figures that exemplify leadership and service to the community.

Coach Sonny Lubick's charisma and good nature have made him an icon among students, fans, friends and Coloradans. This popularity was cemented when a large donation was made to renovate CSU's stadium under the condition that the field would be named for Coach Lubick. Today, the Colorado State Rams meet their opponents in Hughes Stadium, rushing out on to Sonny Lubick Field.

As an alumnus of Colorado State University, I want to thank Coach Lubick for his dedicated service and leadership to the football team, the university and the community.